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FOREWORD

In this volume will be found a collection of papers, written by men and women occupying commanding positions in their own subjects, on some of the most important questions now before the American people. It is an obvious impossibility to include every question of present-day importance. No apology is offered, therefore, for the absence of many subjects which might well have been included. It was the thought of the editor in charge of this volume that the topics selected bore a definite relation to each other and to the national situation.

In this foreword, which is my contribution to the volume, I wish to say a few things from the standpoint of the teacher. Let me begin by calling attention to the fact that there has been a marvelous change in our general program of education. I am not thinking now of our formal educational institutions, for most of our education we get outside of the schoolroom. What I have in mind is the fact that primitive man got most of his training through the ear, whereas modern man gets his training largely through the eye. This contrast has been recognized in many quarters. Verbal promises have not been considered as binding as written. Direct evidence of the eye-witness is more accurate than the story of one whose information has come through the ear. Although in the early days the written word was invested with a semi-sacred character and in spite of the fact that the average man today has learned to read, the critical factors have not been developed to an adequate degree. Enormous masses of printed material now greet us and we lack the ability to discriminate between that which is good and that which is bad.

From many standpoints war is a conflict of ideals rather than a clash of people and of arms. It turns on our standards of life, on the things which we want, the things for which we will fight and for which we will die. It is now clear that the present conflict is primarily between democracy and oligarchy, between the people who are seeking to develop themselves as they think best and other people who are submitting to overhead control, exerted primarily in the interests of the few. Democracy is not a method, it is an

ideal. England, with the forms of monarchy, has been, in many respects, more democratic than the United States.

The point of my first illustration can now be seen. Devotion to ideals can no longer be taught through the ear, from preaching moral sermons. Devotion to common ideals must come from the common experiences of every day life; of those ordinary things which after all are most fundamental. If these common experiences cannot be had, common ideals will not arise. Even in a democracy we must recognize this and secure the substantial freedom of all individuals to develop themselves. To a wonderful degree America has been a melting pot for the immigrant; in part America has failed, because it has neglected to see that the immigrants come in contact with American ideals. We forget that the immigrant does not get his conception of justice or of the persons administering justice from contact with the Supreme Court of the United States, but from the policeman on the beat, the magistrate and the police court. Almost without exception the negroes of this country have been most patriotic and are today as willing to serve the country and die for it as any of us. In reality what have we given them? Have we been concerned with teaching the "negro to know his place" or encouraging him to develop to the extent of his ability? The fact remains then that, in the case of the immigrant and the negro American, we must primarily recognize either that they are part of us and must share our common life or else admit that we have gone on an oligarchic basis and propose to develop the country without regard to them.

From another standpoint, there is some danger at the present time from certain sorts of unworthy education. I think of the danger of passing on foolish gossip, which arises from ignorance and prejudice. We have been so ignorant of the inner conditions in Europe that our judgments of what has been going on there are open to question, and it would seem wise for us all to be guarded in our expression. Not long ago I asked a class the location of Flanders. One boy hazarded the guess that it was in the southeastern part of England, whereas one or two others were sure it was in the northern part of France. That such geographical information can be found in a class of forty University students merely indicates the amount of crude notions that may arise among less highly trained men.

A second source of danger comes through the expression of self-

interest, whether this is voiced by the laboring man in the phrase "give as little as you can; get yours," or by the wealthy profiteer.

A third source of danger comes through the traitor, the one who is deliberately spreading false information in order to aid the enemy. Here we must be on our guard not to condemn other countries for doing that which we seek to do, namely, present ourselves in the most favorable light to the outside world.

This war has revealed the want of vision in our country of the things that might be necessary in case of a crisis. I have no time to speak of the wonderful response that the people of the country are making. I can only point out the terrific cost of the lack of coördination in our industries, in our employment and discharge of men, and in our educational systems. After the war is over, industry, government and education must not be allowed to return to their earlier condition.

Just what changes will come, I do not profess to know. I will emphasize the necessity of making these changes after careful inquiry and deliberate considerations of the situation. I fear that we are likely to take steps under the influence of our emotions which we shall have occasion to regret and perhaps retrace. For illustration the widespread movement throughout the country to abolish the teaching of German is open to serious question. I am of the impression that the most important foreign language for any American to know during the next generation will be German. One can make love to a friend if necessary without using words, but it is not safe to get into close quarters with your enemy unless you understand his language. Germany is not so foolish that she has nothing to learn from her enemy or to say that she is going to cut off communication with the enemy. Think what a marvelous advantage it has been for the Germans to go into Russia, Italy, Serbia and France, speaking native languages. Are we so stupid that we propose to render ourselves impossible to do the same?

I am not discussing the place of modern languages in the public schools, or of existing methods of teaching modern languages. On these topics I have some very definite convictions, which need not be expressed here. I would say that I hope we shall have sense enough to see to it that there are Americans able to speak, read and write any foreign language which we may need to use without compelling us to call in foreigners to do our translation work for us. I am of the

impression that we ought to open our schools to all immigrants and to require all immigrants to learn our language. I am willing to go further and support the suggestion that every child in America should be compelled to attend a school taught in English. As long ago as 1891 Wisconsin passed a law that every school child in Wisconsin must go to a school in which American and English history was taught in English. This law was passed, I understand, to eliminate some of the foreign influence. Shortly after it was enacted it was reported that a delegation of Lutheran ministers called on the governor and asked him not to enforce it. It is a sad commentary but not long thereafter the opposition was so strong that the law was repealed.

In the effort to educate the people of this country to the significance of the present war the existing law which promises to stamp out our national magazines is to be viewed with great concern. As a war measure, if for no other reason, I would advocate the suppression of the new zone law for magazines. In this connection it is interesting to note that someone, Mr. Vanderlip, I believe, has suggested that the crude, easiest way of distinguishing between essential and non-essential industries would be to list those who had to advertise in order to exist.

I have objected to lip service. I want to close with an appeal for personal service. It is not what you say to your community with reference to your loyalty, it is what you do. If you are the millionaire, I do not care how much you preach loyalty to the country and the necessity of giving your service in time of war, if you carry on elaborate improvements of your country estates, employing dozens of men at prices the farmer cannot pay, you are a far bigger traitor to your country than the poor fool down in the gutter in whose heart some injustice rankles and who sputters because he cannot do anything else. Unfortunately, for my own peace of mind and happiness, I chance to belong to that between generation not likely to be directly drawn into the maelstrom of the war, but it may not be inappropriate if I ask only one thing—and is not that the appeal of every one of us—that we be conscripted (and I am not quibbling over the meaning of the term) for whatever service the government needs that is within our power to give.

CARL KELSEY.